

CONCERN OVER LIMITATIONS ON OFFERING AMENDMENTS ON FOREIGN AID BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Mr. Speaker, there comes a time when we expect that legislation that is passed will be offered and passed in a bipartisan manner in the light of the seriousness and importance of the issue it confronts. Unfortunately, at the conclusion of the passage of H.R. 1561, the foreign aid bill, some 60 amendments were not allowed to be discussed. I rise to express my concern over that, as well as the passage of this particular legislation.

□ 1700

For the amendment that I felt was most important, among many others that was eliminated, was the increased funding from \$2 million to \$2,500,000 in fiscal years 1996 and 1997 for the micro- and small enterprise development credit program.

This program, which is administered by the Agency for International Development, has been a successful program emphasizing direct assistance to businesses owned by the poor in developing nations. Most of the businesses employ less than 10 individuals but help develop a strong entrepreneurial tradition in many countries.

The microenterprises are very small, informally organized, nonagricultural businesses that employ a third of the labor force in lower income countries. As I heard one of my Republican colleagues say, it teaches these entities and individuals to fish and not merely to be given fish.

The micro- and small enterprise development program, in conjunction with the private financial institutions, help provide full access to formal financial markets to small businesses that would not otherwise have such access.

These small businesses participating in the MSED are run by and employed by the poor. This would help keep a stabilized atmosphere in developing nations and that is a sure way to ensure political and economic peace.

If we are in fact to be a world power, it is important for us to stand on behalf of economic development in Third World and developing nations helping themselves. Again, we were not able today to rise to the support of the African Development Foundation, by adding to its budget \$1,500,000 to increase it from the \$5 million. This is a modest increase and it reflects the concern of Americans that we must be budget wise.

However, this particular foundation, established in 1980, is a forward-thinking organization that delivers funds directly to self-help organizations in economically undeveloped countries in Africa.

Since no funds are channeled through any foreign government, the ADF

avoids any bureaucratic patterns in dispensing funds. This organization also has been instrumental in expanding ties and developing goodwill among the citizens of the United States and the citizens of many African countries.

In the year 1995, ADF received \$18 million. This year's budget proposes \$7 million, leaving ADF with only \$10 million. However, as we proceed in the years to come, the funding will go to \$5 million, which would be a 50-percent reduction from fiscal year 1996.

At this rate, Mr. Speaker, ADF, which has been very helpful, will simply go out of business.

My amendment that was to be proposed was part of an effort to ensure that these countries are able to stand on their own two feet. It helped agricultural cooperative youth groups and self-help organizations. These groups have been effective stewards of these grants which range from \$25,000 to \$250,000.

Moreover, the ADF conducts annual audits on how these community organizations utilize these funds and ADF has been pleased with the performance of the grantees. Many of my corporate constituents who do business in Africa and other Third World nations have indicated how important it is to maintain a stable climate, how important it is to have a responsible community in these countries so that we in America can do business and create jobs.

My amendment would have helped the African Development Foundation and helped millions of Africans and Americans and support adequate development assistance which would ultimately improve foreign relations and commercial trade between Africa and the United States.

I simply ask, as we move this legislation toward the U.S. Senate, that we enact responsible foreign policy. Yes, be efficient and effective with our dollars. We do not give away dollars recklessly and for no reason, but we do try to help those nations who are trying to help themselves.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the U.S. Senate devise a foreign aid bill that works for Americans and works for its allies.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KIM). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. GOSS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. GENE GREEN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Kansas [Mr. TIAHRT] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. TIAHRT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. POSHARD] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. POSHARD addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

VACATION OF SPECIAL ORDER

Mr. DORNAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to vacate my special order of today for 5 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

OPIC

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Vermont [Mr. SANDERS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, at a time when this country has a \$4.5 trillion national debt, and at a time when there are Members here who are talking about cutting back on Medicare and Medicaid and veterans programs, student loans, school lunch programs, and other programs of tremendous need for the vast majority of our people, it seems to me that we can no longer tolerate spending billions and billions of taxpayers' dollars on corporate welfare. That is money that goes to the largest corporations in America and to the wealthiest people.

I want to say a few words today about one particular program which I think is a very good example of corporate welfare. That is OPIC, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. What OPIC does is receive about \$5 million a year of taxpayers' money. And what they do with that money is something that is very interesting. What they do is help some of the largest corporations in America invest abroad. They provide insurance for those companies who are investing in politically unstable countries such as Russia, Eastern Europe, former Communist bloc and certain Latin American countries. What they are saying is, if there is political unrest in those countries, if your assets are nationalized, we will provide insurance to cover your loss.

Also, OPIC provides generous financing to the large multinationals who wish to invest abroad.

Now, it seems to me that, if the largest corporations in America wish to invest in Russia, wish to invest in Croatia, wish to invest in Peru or Latin America, they have every right in the world to do so. But it also seems to me to be absolutely wrong to say to the middle class of America, people who are working longer hours for lower